

From: Jade Guthrie

Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 1:23 PM

Subject: [EXTERNAL]End ongoing colonial violence at 1492 Land Back Lane

Please be cautious.

This email originates from outside of Haldimand County.

Hi there,

My name is jade guthrie – I am a FoodShare Toronto employee, an organizer with Justice for Migrant Workers, and advocacy co-chair on the Toronto Youth Food Policy Council. I am writing to express my concern over injustices against the Six Nations over 1492 Land Back Lane, also known as the McKenzie Meadows development in Caledonia.

The Haudenosaunee People have held rights to the Grand River Territory as early as 1701. The Haldimand Tract was granted to the Six Nations in 1784 by the British Crown during the American Revolution. However, Canada has ignored this land title and forced the Six Nations to surrender significant portions of their land. 1492 Land Back Lane was also sold between settlers who were squatting over this piece of land. The Indian Act prohibited Indigenous Peoples from hiring lawyers and asserting their land claims until 1951, when that section of the Indian Act was repealed.

In the 1980s, the Six Nations Elected Council brought a series of land claims to assert their sovereignty over Grand River Territory. They agreed to suspend their claims to negotiate with the government. However, the land continues to be expropriated and sold to developers as Canadian government continues to negotiate with the Six Nations. The Canadian government has a duty to respect Haudenosaunee sovereignty and control over Haldimand Tract for the honor of the Crown.

Haudenosaunee Land Defenders have asserted their sovereignty over Haldimand Tract in 2006 and again this year. Land Defenders and their allies in 1492 Land Back Lane have been arrested by the Ontario Police. Bernie Corbett, the Chair of Haldimand County Police Services Board has described their actions as ‘acts of terrorism’ to criminalize the Land Defenders. Haldimand County Mayor Ken Helwit has described the Land Defenders’ assertion of sovereignty as an ‘illegal occupation’. Premier Doug Ford has described it as ‘disturbing’. He further claims: “You don’t start throwing rocks, you don’t start tossing things. This is about living together, working together.”

While many Canadian politicians have publicly affirmed their commitment to Reconciliation, many continue to undermine the sovereignty of Haudenosaunee People and criminalize the actions of Land Defenders.

The Canadian Rule of Law is also complicit in the ongoing violence against Indigenous Peoples through the use of injunctions. Superior Court Justice John Harper ruled for a temporary injunction against the Land Defenders in 1492 Land Back Lane. On October 9th, the Court will have a final hearing that will make the injunction permanent. The injunction continues the historic colonization and land dispossession against the Haudenosaunee People. It also criminalizes the work of the Land Defenders.

As treaty people, we are bound by the Two Row Wampum to speak against the injustices against the Haudenosaunee People. These injustices are also not in line with the UN Declaration of Human Rights and with Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution .

Haudenosaunee Land Defenders have requested the following:

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- That a representative
- from each of your offices attends their open dialogue meeting;
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- That you
- apply pressure to stop the enforcement of the current injunction against the named Jane and John Doe;
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- Prov/Fed
- Governments must respect Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty over their lands and waters.
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- #1492LandBackLane
- remain under Haudenosaunee control and their sovereignty over the Haldimand Tract respected.
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- End the
- criminalization of Land Defenders everywhere
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It is your duty to pressure representatives to act and respond to these, the Haudenosaunee organizers, accordingly. You must actively participate in upholding and implementing the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples regarding Six Nations' most recent action, Canada's promise to Truth & Reconciliation, and Prime Minister Trudeau's commitment to a "nation-to-nation" relationship with Indigenous Communities.

Sincerely,
jade guthrie (*she/her pronouns*)
Community Food Programs Coordinator
FoodShare Toronto